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**CONNECTICUT LAUNCHES BROAD NEW MARKETING INITIATIVE,  
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BRAND IDENTITY**

***State Invests \$22 Million for Marketing and Advertising to Spur Job Growth***

(Hartford, CT) - The state has launched a new two-year marketing initiative to develop, foster and stimulate the state's brand identity and bolster its reputation as a business and tourism destination.

"For the last two years, Connecticut has been the only state in the region to have allocated no marketing money for stimulating business development and tourism," said Governor Dannel P. Malloy. "As we looked at competing states' branding plans, we knew we needed to advertise the state aggressively as a great place to do business and visit. This smart new strategy, leveraging the state's investment in tourism to further economic development goals for attracting new business and recruiting new talent, will help us get there."

Governor Malloy and the state legislature recognized the essential need for Connecticut to better establish itself as a tourism and business hub and increased the Statewide Tourism Marketing Fund in the current biennial budget.

Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development and its Office of Tourism will lead this new branding initiative. To kick it off, the Governor said residents will be invited to share personal stories that express what they love about Connecticut. These stories, which will bring to life Connecticut's best attributes, will be critical to the development and formation of the brand.

"Marketing Connecticut as a place to grow a business, work, live and have fun is a key component of the state's economic development strategy," Governor Malloy said. "We will use this initiative as a way to aggressively bring these messages to our target markets and build upon the strengths we have to offer both businesses and tourists."

Tourism has a significant impact on the state's economy. Based on the most recent analysis conducted by the University of Connecticut's Center for Economic Analysis,

Connecticut reaps \$11.5 billion every year through total traveler and tourism revenue and \$1.15 billion in state and local tax revenue. Travel and tourism creates more than 110,000 jobs throughout the state, or 6.5% of Connecticut's total employment.

To assist in this effort, the state has selected a new marketing team to provide tourism and economic development services for the next two years. They will work with state and industry partners to create a compelling brand identity; serve as the state's branding, marketing, advertising, and online marketing agencies; and provide marketing services to promote tourism, business development and talent recruitment in coordination with Connecticut's existing economic development efforts.

The effort will be led by Chowder Inc., a creative agency specializing in destination marketing and advertising. Other members of the team include Fleishman-Hillard, one of the world's leading strategic communications firms; South Norwalk-based Media Storm; and Waterbury-based research and strategic marketing firm, The Harrison Group.

The agencies are enthusiastic and optimistic about the plan.

"Chowder's experience in branding destinations and devising innovative ways to market them makes us uniquely qualified to help Connecticut draw in business and, ultimately, create jobs," said Chowder Partner and Connecticut resident, Tony Kobylinski. "Working with state officials, private sector partners and our marketing partners, we will use strong market-driving analytics at the forefront of the decision-making process, and employ advertising, public relations, media and entertainment to tell Connecticut's story – and to do so in a way that motivates people to experience it for themselves."

The state's contract with the Chowder Inc. team is not to exceed \$22 million for the two-year contract. The majority of the funding will be invested in media and advertising Connecticut as a year-round, multifaceted tourism destination.